

Washington, D.C. - Today the House of Representatives will continue consideration of H.R. 2584, the FY 2012 Interior and Environment Appropriations bill, which includes sweeping new pollution exemptions, corporate giveaways, and cuts to the federal agencies charged with safeguarding public lands and public health. The Republican bill includes at least 38 anti-environment policy riders carving out exemptions for corporate polluters and prohibiting agencies from enforcing environmental regulations.

"This bill was written by special interests that want to roll back 40 years of progress towards cleaner air and water," Rep. Price said. "It is chock full of anti-environment riders that benefit oil companies, mining companies and other corporate polluters."

Video of Rep. Price's remarks on the House floor:

The bill would slash the EPA budget by 18 percent below FY 2011 and decimate the Clean Water State Revolving Fund with a 55 percent cut. The Clean Water State Revolving Fund helps states finance wastewater system improvements to meet Clean Water Act goals. The EPA cuts could cause significant job losses at the agency, which employs more than 2,000 local residents at its Research Triangle Park facility. The EPA's RTP facility is its largest operation outside of Washington, D.C.

"Like the budget cuts pushed through by General Assembly Republicans, the reckless cuts proposed in this bill by congressional Republicans risk job losses at a time when we can least afford them," Rep. Price said. "They have managed to attack the environment and the economy in a single piece of legislation."

Overall, the bill provides \$27.47 billion, a cut of \$2.09 billion or 7 percent below the FY 2011 enacted level and \$3.82 billion below the President's request. For the EPA, the bill provides \$7.15 billion, a cut of \$1.5 billion or 18 percent below the FY 2011 enacted level and a cut of \$1.8 billion or 20 percent below the President's request. A final vote on the bill is expected later this week.

What's in the Special Interest Gift Bag? –H.R. 2584 Policy Riders

Blocks EPA Greenhouse Gas Standard for Automobiles [Section 453]: Prohibits funding for the EPA to develop or finalize a new greenhouse gas standard for automobiles after model year 2016. New EPA standards could help reduce oil consumption and by as much as 2.4 million barrels of oil every day by 2030, reducing our dependence on foreign oil. The rider also blocks states from implementing their own clean vehicle standards.

Waives Clean Air Act Requirements for Big Oil Companies [Section 443]: Amends the Clean Air Act to (1) preclude EPA from requiring offshore sources to demonstrate compliance with health-based air quality standards anywhere but in a single onshore area; (2) reduce the length of time during which exploration platforms and drill ships are considered emission sources under the CAA, thereby limiting the time when emissions would be controlled; (3) make it impossible to use the permitting program to set emission control requirements for service vessels associated with offshore sources; and (4) replace a relatively fast, inexpensive process for citizens to challenge government action with a longer, more expensive review process in the Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit.

Blocks Clean Air Act Regulations of Fine Particles/Soot [Section 454]: Prohibits funding for the EPA to regulate certain levels of particulate matter in the air under the Clean Air Act.

Blocks Endangered Species Act Designations [Language on page 8]: Prohibits funding for Endangered Species Act listings or critical habitat designations.

Blocks Greenhouse Gas Rule on Stationary Sources [Section 431]: Severely limits EPA's ability to regulate greenhouse gases. For a one-year period EPA is prohibited from proposing or promulgating regulations to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from stationary sources. The language also prevents civil tort or common law lawsuits during this one-year period. Furthermore the language states that any permit applied for during the one-year period shall not be federally enforceable.

Blocks Update to Mountaintop Removal Mining Rule [Section 432]: Prohibits the Office of

Surface Mining (OSM) from updating the Stream Buffer Rule. This is for the benefit of companies engaged in Mountaintop Removal Mining.

Blocks Mountaintop Removal Mining Policy at Multiple Agencies [Sec. 433]: Prohibits EPA, the Corps of Engineers, and OSM from implementing or enforcing any policy or procedure contained in two specified documents on Mountaintop Removal Mining.

Blocks Coal Ash Regulation [Section 434]: Prohibits EPA from regulating Fossil Fuel Combustion Waste (coal ash) under the Solid Waste Disposal Act.

Blocks Modification of Clean Water Act [Sec. 435]: Prohibits EPA from changing or supplementing guidance or rules related to the scope of the Clean Water Act.

Blocks Arsenic Cancer Study & Formaldehyde Risk Assessments [Section 444]: New authorization language requiring EPA to improve its Integrated Risk Information System (IRIS) seeking to draw doubt to the program that highlights health implications from environmental contaminants. The language stops the release of draft or final risk assessments that are not based on improvements in IRIS based on a National Research Council assessment of formaldehyde. Further requires the National Academy of Science to review EPA's changes to IRIS and review risk assessments undertaken by EPA. The language goes on to limit funds for any action that would lower exposure levels below or within background concentration levels in ambient air, drinking water, soil, or sediment. Report language directs EPA to take no further action to post its draft cancer assessment of inorganic arsenic until the completion of the NAS study.

Removes Protection of Grand Canyon from Uranium Mining Claims [Section 445]: Prohibits the Secretary of the Interior from implementing a land withdrawal to protect the Grand Canyon from new uranium mining claims.

Blocks EPA Opinions on Pesticides [Section 447]: Prevents the EPA from using biological opinions related to pesticides and the Endangered Species Act, with a focus on ESA-listed salmon.

Blocks Clean Air Act Regulations of Cement Industry [Section 448]: Prohibits funding for the EPA to implement Clean Air Act regulations on the manufacture of Portland cement.

Blocks EPA Enforcement of Florida Water Quality Standards [Section 452]: Prohibits funding for the EPA to implement or enforce numeric Florida Water Quality Standards even though the state receives millions in federal funds for water projects.

Blocks EPA Regulation of Hard Rock Mining Operations [Section 455]: Prohibits funding for the EPA to develop additional financial assurance requirements for hard rock mining operations.

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